

REMARKS

Before discussing the subject matter recited in the claims of this application and as a preface to commenting on the issues raised in the most recent Official Action, the following general overview is provided of features and operational characteristics associated with a device for producing a gas cushion according to at least one embodiment described and illustrated in the present application.

The device includes a chamber 7 connected to a source of compressed gas 21. The upper wall 10 of the chamber 7 has an external surface dimensioned to the outline of the glass sheet and a plurality of apertures 15 for the passage of the gas. The apertures are designed as nozzles 15, each having an entry bore 17 and a progressively widening exit hole 16, and each being in fluid communication with the source of compressed gas 21 so that the compressed gas passes first through the entry bore 17 and then through the exit hole 16. As can be seen in Figs. 3 and 4, which each illustrate an embodiment of the upper wall 10, there is a greater degree of perforation (i.e., a greater sum of the nozzle exit areas in relation to the total area of the respective zone) in edge zones (12, 13) of the external surface of the upper wall 10 than in a central zone 11 of the external surface of the upper wall 10. The central zone 11 is completely surrounded by the edge zones (12, 13).

Turning now to the claims, Claim 1, the only independent claim, is rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,374,078, hereinafter Wright.

Wright discloses an apparatus for supporting and heating glass sheets on a gas bed in which, *inter alia*, a support bed block 40 is provided with a plurality of perforations 34. The Official Action states that a central zone of a bed in Wright can be defined to have a greater degree of perforation than in edge zones. However,

Claim 1 recites the opposite-- that the external surface has a greater degree of perforation in edge zones than in a central zone. Moreover, it is clear from a careful study of Wright's disclosure that a central zone of a bed in Wright cannot be defined to have a lesser degree of perforation than in edge zones.

Accordingly, Wright does not disclose a device for producing a gas cushion for supporting a preheated glass sheet, includign a chamber connected to a source of compressed gas, the chamber including an upper wall having an external surface dimensioned to the outline of the glass sheet and having a plurality of apertures for the passage of gas, wherein the apertures are designed as nozzles, each having an entry bore as well as a progressively widening exit hole and each being in fluid communication with the source of compressed gas so that the compressed gas passes first through the entry bore and then through the exit hole, and that the external surface of the upper wall of the chamber has a greater degree of perforation (sum of exit areas of the exit holes in relation to total area) in edge zones of the external surface of the upper wall than in a central zone of the external surface of the upper wall which is completely surrounded by the edge zones, as recited in Claim 1.

Claim 1 is therefore allowable over the disclosure in Wright, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in the dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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